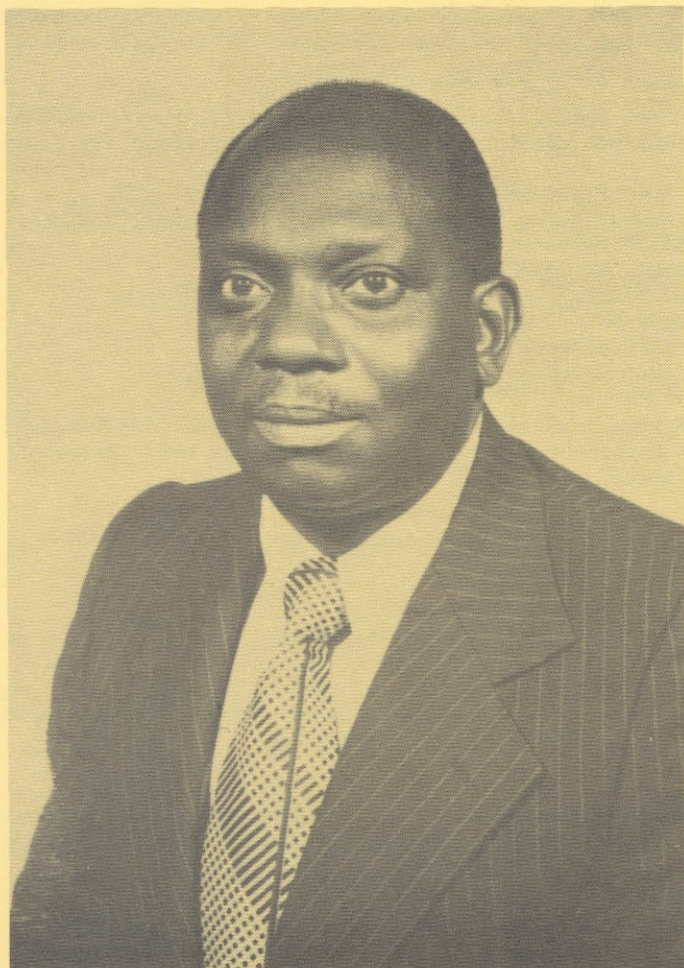


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MOZAMBICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND THE WEST 1975-1984

by Dr. Luis Benjamin Serapaio

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The folk tale about feeling part of the elephant is exemplified by Mozambique politics. What may have seemed a simple struggle of Africans against Portuguese has been complicated by internal African strife.

The original goals of the Frelimo movement have been complicated by the Nkomati Accord signed between South Africa and Mozambique.

This does not surprise this editor because African problems are rarely as simple as they seem from the United States, where new Christopher Columbuses are always setting sail to rediscover Africa.

The thrust of this paper, much revised since it was originally delivered at the African Studies Association in October 1984, is that Frelimo has, in a sense, betrayed the western-educated Mozambicans. This has at least a touch of irony because the founder of Frelimo and its spiritual godfather was Eduardo Mondlane. Not only did this editor have the honor of sharing an NBC national broadcast with Eduardo in the 1950s when the Portuguese were just starting their second five-hundred-year development plan, but I was with Eduardo the last time he visited Lourenco Marques, or present day Maputo.

Eduardo was a student at Northwestern University when I was on the faculty of the University of Chicago, and we often discussed his burning desire to see his people free. Mondlane was profoundly influenced by the West and by Christianity. Even on the eve of Frelimo's formation, he still held out hopes of peaceful reform by the Salazar regime. The over-a-decade struggle for political independence was met. But the struggle for economic independence and a higher standard of living for the people of his country continues under great pressure.

To present at least two points of view to our subscribers, we sought permission to publish the remarks delivered at the Munger Africana Library in late 1984 by Aquino da Braganza, the head of African Studies at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo. We have yet to receive permission to publish his thoughtful off-the-record remarks on the course of the Mozambique Revolution.

It is only fair to say that at the African Studies Meeting where this paper was delivered, there were sharp differences of opinion expressed in the floor discussion of the paper by Professor da Braganza and by other Frelimo members in the audience.

Because relatively little has been published on internal struggles and differences by Mozambicans, we are attempting to broaden the limited scholarship with this account of Professor Serapiao. The paper has been edited by Heidi Langeberg for greater conciseness and clarity. The editor takes responsibility for any nuance of meaning which may have been altered, without intent, in the editing.

After our Mozambican author finished high school, he studied philosophy and theology at the Catholic Seminary of Maputo. Because of his anti-colonial stand, which resulted in a confrontation with the archbishop of Maputo, Custodio Alvim Pereira, he was forced to quit the seminary. Later on, he came to the United States where he joined the Mozambican Student Union (UNEMO). He became an officer of the organization, and served as the chairman of political affairs, general secretary, vice-president, and president.

In his academic career, in the United States, he received a M.A. from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C. After graduation he became a visiting assistant professor at the University of Notre Dame. He is an associate professor in the African Studies Program, Howard University.

Dr. Serapiao is co-author of Mozambique in the Twentieth Century: From Colonialism to Independence. University Press of America, 1979. His articles have appeared in Issue, Journal for the Society of Common Insight, Journal of Church and State and the Lusophone Areas Studies Journal.

Ned Munger

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FRELIMO'S LEADERSHIP

To understand Mozambique's foreign policy towards the West it is necessary to look at the history of FRELIMO. FRELIMO's leadership has gone through three periods of transformation: the 60's, 70's, and 80's. The formation of FRELIMO took place in the 60s. Most writers describe the origin of FRELIMO as the coalition of three political organizations that were fighting against the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique. These movements, consisting of black nationalists, have been identified as the Mozambican National Democratic Union (UDENAMO), the Mozambican National Union (MANU), and the African Union of Independent Mozambique (UNAMI).

Another powerful but less publicized group that joined FRELIMO was what Patricia McGowan has called "O Bando de Argel" (The Gang of Argel). The Gang was a Marxist group that consisted predominantly of non-blacks. However, it is interesting to note that in the historical development of FRELIMO's leadership there was never a black intellectual who was a Marxist. Even Dr. Eduardo Mondlane, the first president of FRELIMO, was a strong nationalist.

THE ORIGIN AND THE PARTICIPATION OF THE GANG IN FRELIMO

The Gang was a group of predominantly non-black individuals (Whites, Indians/Goans, and Mulattoes) who were dissatisfied with Antonio de Oliveria Salazar's¹ domestic and colonial policies and fled from Portugal to France, the Soviet Union, and other countries. Later they grouped together in Argel (Algeria) forming a Soviet-influenced Marxist group. In Argelia the Gang tried to work out strategies that would help the Portuguese Communist Party, led by Alvaro Cunhal, to liberate Portugal and its colonies from Salazar's dictatorial regime.²

During the formation of FRELIMO, 1960-1962, the Gang left Argelia to go to Dar-es-Salaam to join the previously mentioned three nationalist movements. It is here that one should start tracing the seeds of FRELIMO's anti-Western policies of the 60's and 70's, and also, the origin of the dominance of non-blacks in FRELIMO's leadership. The Gang, led by Marcelino dos Santos, a mulatto Mozambican of Cape Verdian descent, and Aquino de Braganca, an Indian/Goan, had fewer members than the other three movements but were better trained academically. However, from 1962 to 1969, FRELIMO was dominated by black nationalists. The most visible ones were Dr. Eduardo Mondlane, the President, Filipe Samuel Magaia, the Command Chief of the Army, and Urias Simango, the Vice President. These

charismatic and intellectual individuals represented the few trained blacks of FRELIMO. At this time FRELIMO's foreign policy was more pro-West, which can be seen in Dr. Eduardo Mondlane's good relationship with the Kennedy Administration. He made frequent trips to the United States, and it was from one of the American foundations that he was able to get the money for the establishment of the Mozambique Institute in Dar-es-Salaam.

The influential Dr. Mondlane did have definite views on the issue of race and its role in the liberation struggle. Specifically, he did not hesitate to define and confine the role of whites in the Mozambican struggle:

In principle, FRELIMO has no discrimination against whites, we accept them to work in technical jobs, but not at the top level of politics. They can be members of FRELIMO, they can work in any job, but they cannot be members of the Central Committee, and so on.³

He was very concerned about the relationship between FRELIMO's leadership and blacks in the rural areas. According to him, although the leadership had come from the urban area, it had its roots in the rural areas. Dr. Mondlane considered these people to form only one people, the rural people. In his own words:

To speak on a personal level about something that is generally true of other members of the Central Committee of FRELIMO, I was born in the countryside, and, until I was 15 years of age, I had never seen a town.⁴

THE GANG AND THE POWER

From the mid-sixties to the early-seventies there was a struggle for power between the black nationalists and the Marxists. During this time a number of strong black nationalists were mysteriously assassinated. This was the case of Jaime Rivaz Siganuke, Filipe Samuel Magaia, Dr. Eduardo Chivambo Mondlane, and Silverio Nungu. Others, such as Miguel Artur Murupa and Lazaro Kavandame escaped assassination. The third group was completely eliminated when Urias Simango and the other members were forced out of Dar-es-Salaam indefinitely. After the disappearance of these black nationalists, particularly that of Dr. Mondlane, the Marxists took total control of FRELIMO's leadership. At this stage the relationship between the West and FRELIMO was reduced considerably. For example, after the assassination of Dr. Mondlane, there were no FRELIMO students sent to the United States nor any other Western countries until 1975, the year of Mozambique's independence.

Another factor that helps explain the post-Mondlane FRELIMO foreign policy was the United States' and other NATO members' lack of interest in Mozambique's struggle for liberation. This contributed a great deal to the deterioration of Mozambique's relationship with the West. However, the main point is that when Dr. Mondlane and other black nationalists were in control, there were some measurable ties between FRELIMO and the West.

The new control of FRELIMO by Marxists, a predominantly non-black group in sub-Saharan Africa, raises a very interesting question. Logically, for any liberation movement of sub-Saharan Africa to get some credit in the O.A.U. circles, and also to draw internal support from the population, the movement must be represented by a black man. Not having a strong black leader available to them, FRELIMO came up with the idea of "a new man," which in FRELIMO's literature means to be a Marxist. Thus, FRELIMO only had to find a black man who could be transformed into "a new man," then through him they could initiate and implement most of their political and socio-economic programs. This was a very important idea in FRELIMO's literature, Machel even brags that he became "a new man" when he was in Tanzania.⁵ With Machel as "a new man," FRELIMO saw the opportunity of transforming all Mozambican people into Marxists. The prospects of this becoming a reality made for a very strong Gang leadership in 1975 when Mozambique gained independence.

To the Gang, independence of Mozambique became a symbol of imperialist defeat. With a high level of political arrogance, FRELIMO's leaders convinced themselves that they could express all of their Marxist ideas without reservation and implement them without restraints. In foreign policy they were going to follow the principles of non-alignment. However, they defined non-alignment to be "alignment against imperialism."⁶ Thus FRELIMO's foreign policy, particularly between 1975 to 1981, was virtually anti-West.

FRELIMO AND THE UNITED STATES

Immediately on the independence celebration day, a signal was given to the United States of how rocky the future relationship between the two countries was going to be. The United States was not invited to participate in the festivities of independence. Later, on September 23, 1975, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger met the Mozambican Foreign Minister, Joaquim Chissano, in New York where they signed a joint communique establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. That same year the United States decided to open its embassy in Maputo. Some six years later, however, four American diplomats were expelled from Mozambique on espionage charges. They were then considered personnae non gratae and were blocked from returning home. The few Mozambicans who did have the audacity to

return home after independence usually ended up in jail, like Academy Pande, or were sent to reeducation camps. This latter option was the case for Andre Saene, Joaquin Marungo. Joao Wafianda. Gilberto Waya, and Boaventura Varimbo.

This jailing and other punishment seemed to follow the spirit of the resolution of the eighth Central Committee meeting that took place February 1976. The resolution warned the people that the Mozambicans returning home from Western countries were agents of imperialism whose aims were to infiltrate the Mozambican political system. It called for special attention to be given to Mozambicans returning from the United States because, according to the resolution, these were the same individuals who had published a document years ago criticizing FRELIMO.⁸

FRELIMO AND PORTUGAL

The hostility and resentment against Portugal for the ten years of colonial war were clearly apparent at the Independence Day celebration. Like the United States, Portugal was not invited to participate in the festivities. Since then and until the visit of the Portuguese President, Antonio Eanes, to Mozambique in 1979, both countries exchanged complaints and charges against each other. Portugal was very concerned and irritated over the rumors about arrest and ill treatment of Portuguese citizens by FRELIMO in Mozambique.⁹ It was in this period that Machel's Interior Minister became notorious because of his drastic measures and expulsions of Portuguese citizens. He became known in Mozambique as the Minister of 24 and 24. In the expulsion order, he gave Portuguese who had to leave the country 24 hours to do so and limited their luggage to 24 kilograms. FRELIMO even went as far as justifying the killing of a Portuguese citizen by claiming that he had joined the Mozambique National Resistance against the Mozambican government, which was punishable by death according to a security law that had already been passed by March 1979.¹⁰ Portugal refused to listen to FRELIMO's reasoning, and protested violently.¹¹ Another issue of conflict between the two countries was FRELIMO's nationalization policy which included Portuguese companies. Portugal was demanding prompt and adequate compensation, but FRELIMO ignored the demands.¹²

FRELIMO AND THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The hostility of FRELIMO against South Africa goes back to the period of the Mozambican war when FRELIMO's guerrillas fought against South African soldiers who were helping the Portuguese. South African intelligence also provided information to the Portuguese government with which Portugal sought to destroy FRELIMO.¹³ Thus, there was even

a time when FRELIMO felt that it was fighting against both Portugal and South Africa.

After independence, FRELIMO increased its resentment against South Africa, mainly because many Portuguese fleeing from Mozambique went to South Africa and formed a group known as the Dragon of Death.¹⁴ This group includes both Portuguese intellectuals and wealthy businessmen.¹⁵ The objective of this group has been to return to Mozambique and overthrow the Marxist-Leninist regime. The Dragon of Death was involved in some sabotages against FRELIMO in Maputo but, as we shall see later, as long as FRELIMO enjoyed the support of a majority of the black military commanders and the majority of the black people in Mozambique, this group did not have any measurable success.

FRELIMO also vehemently protested the South African military's direct attacks on Mozambique, and it attributed the success of the MNR to South African support. South Africans, on the other hand, had their complaints against FRELIMO. They charged that FRELIMO was harboring the African National Congress' guerrilla movement in Maputo. They emphasized that South Africa was rightfully justified to attack Maputo as a self-defensive measure. The pressure on Mozambique became so great that FRELIMO finally decided to end the hostility and sign a "peace agreement" known as the Nkomati Accord.

THE CRISIS OF POLITICA DE TRIUNFALISMO

To the gang, independence of Mozambique was a symbol of imperialist defeat. FRELIMO's leaders had convinced themselves that they could express all of their Marxist ideas without reservation and that they could implement them without restraints. It is this aggressive attitude, coupled with a high level of political arrogance, that I shall call "Politica de Triunfalistas" (the Victorious). The Triunfalistas never succeeded in winning the hearts and minds of the majority of the population, particularly the rural blacks, and thus, the 1980's saw Triunfalismo in a crisis. There were two main reasons for their failure. One is the problem of adapting the Marxist-Leninist principles to the Mozambican situation. The second is the use of Portuguese colonialists' methods to solve the socio-economic and political problems of Mozambique.

For example, since the Triunfalistas came to power they have talked a lot about the class struggle and the elimination of the bourgeois class, or of those individuals with aspirations of the bourgeois class. Yet the issue of which social group in Mozambique belongs to the bourgeois class has never been addressed seriously. FRELIMO articulated a vague idea called "Xiconhoca" which generally gets a post facto definition and is used when a FRELIMO official decides to label any individual whom he may not like for whatever

reason.¹⁷

As for the strategy of solving the socio-economic and political problems, the Truinfalistas have used Portuguese colonialists' methods. Take the example of the forced labor system that was used by the colonial regime. As much as FRELIMO condemned forced labor before, today FRELIMO is forcing individuals to leave their home areas to work in the state farms for little pay. The administration of justice is almost the same, if not worse, than that of the colonialists. The old-time concentration camps still exist, except that now they are called "reeducation camps," "centers for education," or "reproduction centers."¹⁷ Some of them have been converted into communal villages, and the population is being forced into them.¹⁸ Corporal punishment, namely Palmatoria and floggings, are back into FRELIMO's system.¹⁹ In respect to social relationships and power, the myth of non-racialism still prevails. During the colonial period it was on the basis of non-racialism that non-blacks controlled all of the powerful positions in government and politics. Today the non-black Marxists, on the basis of the same non-racial policy, still control virtually all of the powerful positions in government and politics.²⁰ It seems that black Mozambicans cannot be good capitalists, nor good Marxists.

Depending on one's political stand, there are different interpretations for why the government strategy never changed even after independence. One interpretation is that people of the same national character are still either making decisions or influencing them. Before, the same people excluded blacks in the name of capitalism; today, blacks are excluded in the name of Marxism-Leninism.

For the majority of black Mozambicans, independence and Marxism-Leninism brought virtually nothing positive. Thus, their reaction is now still the same as it was in 1962; to fight militarily against the regime. The big question is who helped before independence, and who is helping now. Analysts on the origin and prospects of the Mozambique National Resistance have failed greatly because they overlooked race as one of the contributing factors in the "success" of the MNR. Many writers on the origin and "success" of the MNR give credit to the Dragon of Death, to South Africa's assistance, or to the Rhodesian special branch. The truth of the matter is that as long as blacks in Mozambique were still tolerant of Machel's regime, the Dragon of Death did not have credibility among the population in Mozambique. The South Africans and the Rhodesians were perceived as universal common enemies of the Mozambican people and nobody wanted any help from them. However, as soon as FRELIMO started increasingly to alienate many blacks, particularly those in the Army, the Resistance became strong in terms of acceptance among the black people in the country and also strong in terms of military success.

To counterattack resistance FRELIMO used the colonialist's strategy of the period of war against FRELIMO. Suspected people were

sent to reeducation camps, the death penalty and corporal punishment without previous trial were introduced, and restrictions for travel in and outside the country were initiated and enforced. Thus, a reign of terror began to dominate Mozambique, while the war of Resistance was gaining momentum, crippling the country's economy.

Meanwhile, the ideological stand of the gang was weakening. Some of them started to reexamine the application of Marxism in Mozambique. The case in point is that of Aquino de Braganca. Out of the gang members he had been the main one responsible for coaching Samora Machel on Marxism, but by the middle of 1983 he confessed to the public that he was no longer sure of himself in relation to Marxism.²¹ In addition, the ideological stand of the gang was weakened by the removal of Marcelino dos Santos from Maputo to the city of Beira.

At this time, Somora Machel surrounded himself with individuals who in the past had gone along with the Gang's ideology and programs. However, these individuals had never been members of the Gang, and thus were never committed to them. A typical example is that of Jacinto Veloso who is now the economic advisor in the President's Office, and Praukash Ratilal, Minister of the Central Bank of Mozambique. Both of them have always been pro-West and now are the most influential individuals in the making of Machel into another "new man" for the West.²² Jacinto Veloso even overshadowed Joaquim Chissano, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, on some important issues pertinent to foreign affairs. For instance, Veloso was the main architect of the Nkomati Accord. He spoke to foreign reporters and other foreign circles on the talks between FRELIMO and the Mozambique National Resistance.²³ On the other hand, Praukash Ratilal has been in a constant shuttle diplomacy in search of capital in Western countries.²⁴

STRATEGIES FOR FOREIGN POLICY

Here we shall again see some similarities of strategies between the Portuguese foreign policy for the colonies when Portugal was pressured by colonial wars, and FRELIMO's foreign policy under pressure from the MNR activities. Before the colonial wars, Portugal, and Salazar in particular, decided to restrict investments for Mozambique and its other colonies. Portugal strongly criticized the United States and other Western powers for not supporting her anti-decolonization stand. However, when Portugal became pressured by the war, it opened its doors to these same countries for foreign investments and military assistance in hope that the offer would generate support against FRELIMO's guerrillas.

FRELIMO now faces a strikingly similar situation with the MNR war. Economically the war has brought Mozambique to its knees. Direct attacks by the MNR, including the South African attacks, cost the

country \$333 million in 1982 and 1983. Destruction attributed to the MNR's activities include 500 primary schools, 86 secondary schools, 130 communal villages, and 900 rural shops.²⁵ At the same time Mozambique faced serious problems in acquiring foreign exchange. At the end of 1983, FRELIMO not only was in default of its payments for international bills, but some of its checks bounced.

Now Mozambique has an open-door policy for the Western investors. The capitalists are coming to Maputo to inquire about the conditions for investments.²⁶ They want to make sure that the capitalist business modus operandi is applied in Mozambique. After a meeting with FRELIMO officials, Orville Freeman, President of Business International, told reporters, "We said it bluntly to them, that we were coming here to make a profit."²⁷ Indeed, business corporations have been successful in pressuring FRELIMO to produce a code for investment laws.²⁸ Since the door was opened for foreign investments, there has been a steady growth of multinational corporations in Mozambique. From 1981 to 1983 almost 100 companies, mostly Western, have entered contract negotiations with FRELIMO's government.²⁹ The Nkomati Accord finally gave the South African businessmen investment opportunities. FRELIMO officials are very eager to see this relationship work. They have already decided to lease lands to South African farmers.³⁰

For military assistance, Portugal was the first Western country to be asked for help.³¹ This assistance was supposed to consist of training FRELIMO's military in Portugal as well as in Mozambique. Portugal was also going to assist with military equipment including uniforms for FRELIMO's soldiers. Interestingly enough, FRELIMO was not opposed to the receipt of military aid from the United States, and also from South Africa, if such assistance could be provided.³²

PORTUGAL, SOUTH AFRICA, AND THE UNITED STATES' INTERESTS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Although Portugal, South Africa, and the United States all have special interests in Mozambique, they do not all have the same objectives. In the case of Portugal, one can say categorically that all Portuguese, regardless of their political ideologies -- Marxists, Social democrats, and capitalists, want to return to and control Mozambique. The Portuguese believe that his approach will achieve a cultural goal of keeping Mozambique under the Lusitanian community, and an economic goal of providing a place for investments. Mozambique would also be a viable solution in solving the unemployment problems in Portugal. In fact, a study done by Marth de la Cal, a New York Times correspondent, showed that within a decade over 700,000 Portuguese immigrants living in the EEC countries will have to return home because those countries are also facing high unemployment.³³ Presently, Portugal would prefer to return to Mozambique through FRELIMO. Machel

is eager to continue in power and has already proven that he can be persuaded to become "another new man" for the Portuguese.

To understand South Africa's interest in Mozambique, one should keep in mind the geographic locations of both countries. Mozambique falls exactly within the zone of South Africa's plan for the Constellation of States which would provide a buffer zone from the African National Congress. Mozambique would also provide a great economic opportunity for South African businessmen. A way for South Africa to get into Mozambique could be through the Mozambique National Resistance. Indeed, in the past ten years South Africa has had the opportunity to know the leaders of MNR. Both sides owe each other a favor. The Resistance served as an instrument for South Africa's diplomatic victory which was symbolized by the Nkomati Accord. While South Africa contributed greatly to FRELIMO's acceptance of the Resistance as an equal partner for the peace negotiations.

The United States is following the efforts of Portugal and South Africa with considerable interest. Both countries will further the United States' objectives in Mozambique, which are to weaken if not eliminate the Soviet Union's influence in that country. Because of its political stand and military readiness, South Africa plays an effective role in neutralizing any neighboring black country that wishes to go communist. Portugal, on the other hand, sees its importance to the United States in terms of the American bases present on its islands of the Azores. Portugal is also ready to provide manpower to Mozambique if the United States decides to invest there. Indeed, the United States could use the language and other skills of the Portuguese to manage U.S. investments in Mozambique. Thus, the United States is in a dilemma to satisfy Portugal and South Africa equally since the objectives of Portugal and South Africa are mutually exclusive.

CONCLUSION

The ideology of Mozambican foreign policy is now in a crisis. The gang is losing control of power and there is still no unified strong group in FRELIMO's party, nor in the government to inspire a defined new direction. Although Machel may still be a charismatic leader, ideologically he is desperately searching for anyone who can make him into "another new man," a "new man" who is capable of bringing Mozambique out of its present social, economic, political, and military chaos.

The comrades, in almost twelve years of control, have failed to realize that the military section of FRELIMO has been predominantly a nationalist group.³⁴ These nationalists, most of them black, constitute the bulk of FRELIMO's army. As soldiers, they have seen death and mutilations of their relatives and friends in the remote

villages of the countryside. They may live in the cities, but they have links with the people in the rural areas, and would rather be considered brothers than comrades.

The comrades, on the other hand, are busy theorizing in the political sector of FRELIMO. In their protective offices they propound political, social, and economic theories that draw the attention or the applause of the outside world. These theories, however, have little impact on the hearts and minds of the rural people in Mozambique. There is definitely a gap between the political leadership and the population. If foreign powers wish to protect their interests in Mozambique, they will have to take this reality into account in the formulation of foreign policy.

In their foreign policy Mozambicans are now faced with having to choose one of the following three painful and dangerous decisions: (a) to become part of the Lusitanian Community; (b) to join the Constellation of States; or (c) to become self-sufficient with the help of the international community. However, the latter decision can hardly be achieved since Mozambique is a country whose economy has almost been totally destroyed, and since charitable foreign aid has never really existed in this world.

FOOTNOTES

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